



CITY COUNCIL

Public Works Committee

Tuesday, February 20, 2007
Meeting Report

Attendance: M. Goodman-Hinnershitz; M. Baez, Chair, V. Spencer

Others City Staff Attending: C. Jones, C. Younger, C. Kanezo, D. Hoag

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Baez at approximately 6:05 p.m.

I. Treatment Capacity Update (Committee of the Whole)

Ms. Hoag read her monthly report (see attached report). All deadlines have been satisfied and design work and the evaluation of financing options for plant construction are in progress. Treatment alternative reports were completed and submitted to the Department of Justice, Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Environmental Protection.

Mr. Spencer asked who would be responsible for providing financial advice on the project, since Mark Lundquist has left Financial Solutions Inc. Mr. Churchill stated that while Mark might have left Financial Solutions, the company still exists and will continue to provide the same level of quality service. In order to acquaint Council with the new representatives from Financial Solutions, Mr. Spencer suggested arranging a meeting. Mr. Churchill thought this was a good idea; he agreed to coordinate the meeting with the Council Office.

II. East Ends and Isaac Walton League Lease Agreements

Mr. Younger informed the committee that after a brief investigation he was able to locate copies of the proposed agreement with the Isaac Walton League. Mr. Younger explained that the agreement is proposed to remain in place for a period of twenty-five years. In exchange for a lease of the property the league would continue to provide maintenance and upkeep on the property and surrounding areas. Mr. Spencer felt uncomfortable with allowing a twenty-five year lease; he considered such a long lease to be too restrictive. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz asked if a long period lease is standard in these types of arrangements. Mr. Younger responded that there really are no standards in regards to agreement length.

Mr. Jones commented on the maintenance performed by the league and the burden this takes off of Public Works. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz felt a meeting with representatives of the league would be appropriate before recommendations approving the renewal of the lease are made to Council. Mr. Kanezo was asked to arrange a meeting with Richard Helm, League President.

Mr. Spencer asked for a detailed explanation of the lease agreement in place with the East Ends Club. Mr. Younger informed the committee that the property and building are owned by the city, how the club was able to establish a lease is not clear. What is clear is the existing lease has been expired for some time. Mr. Spencer explained in regard to the East Ends club, he has a number of concerns: length of an agreement; 2. use of city property by a private club; 3. city liability; 4. the suspected discriminatory practices of the club and how this could cause the public to perceive the city in a negative light.

There was some discussion concerning alleged discrimination occurring at the East Ends Club. The committee was in agreement that if discriminatory practices are followed the lease with East Ends should not be renewed. One point was made about the stabilizing influence of the club. Should the property be vacated the City would need to find another tenant before the property fell into disrepair. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed as she feared the prospect of another Omega Club. Mr. Kanezo suggested meeting with representatives of the East End Club at the next Public Works meeting. Ms. Baez agreed and asked Mr. Kanezo to make the necessary arrangements.

III. Street Lighting

Mr. Jones explained lack of staff in Engineering has seriously curtailed the city's ability to maintain, replace and repair street lights. In previous years the city had a staff electrician. The position went unfilled for several years and was eventually eliminated due to budgetary concerns. The lack of a staff electrician has compelled the city to contract out to have the work preformed, which rapidly exhausts the allocated resources. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz asked what projects existing staff were capable of handling. Mr. Jones explained current personnel do not have the required skills to handle anything beyond the most basic problems.

Ms. Baez asked if reallocated CDBG dollars were going to be used to improve lighting. Mr. Jones noted large scale lighting and maintenance projects are planned and will be funded with approximately \$500,000.00 in reallocated funds. Ms. Baez asked how the city would be able to maintain the lights after installation. Mr. Jones indicated the Administration is presently having discussion on methods of providing adequate support on a continuing basis. Mr. Jones stressed Public Works is committed to improving the quality of lighting throughout the city and will make every effort to ensure improvement is made.

Respectfully submitted by Chris Kanezo, Deputy City Clerk